The Quadruplets

Allegra Mason was an only child until the age of almost eight, when she, literally overnight, became the eldest of five.

Her mother's pregnancy had been excruciating, and Allegra had often found herself in the care of Aunt Louise, her mum's younger sister. Allie's father prioritised being there for his wife and the babies, a trend that continued after the quads were born. Mirabelle, Thomas, Henry, and Rosanna.

"You must be so excited, Allie," her best friend, Lia, had gushed. "I mean, four babies - wow. I can't wait to see them all."

Allegra had mixed feelings. Sure, she was excited, and she actually enjoyed helping out. Even dirty nappies didn't faze her.

On the other hand, it was overwhelming, and all about the quads now. Family and friends wanted to take photos of the babies and upload them to social media, and sometimes they asked for Allegra to be in the pictures, but often, not. Home was noisy and messy, and Allie had had to move into the box room.

Allegra spent as much time as possible at friends' houses, to avoid being stuck at home, or packed off to Aunt Louise's. And since neither Lia nor Sophie, both of whom were only children and went on about

how lucky Allie was to have four siblings, seemed remotely understanding...

Allegra started to hang around with a different group of friends. Ones who were not a great influence on her. The ringleader was Carys Lawrence, whose reputation preceded her. But Allie didn't care. She needed to rebel, and her parents barely seemed to notice. Their firstborn had been sidelined.

It wasn't until Allegra and her friends were caught shoplifting that her parents realised that something was seriously wrong. A series of events followed, as Allie's world spiralled, and she began to lose control.

As the quads grew up, Allegra began to bond with them more, but her parents both resented that their eldest daughter needed more than they now had to give. They remained focused on the younger children, and ignored Allie, until periodically, her behaviour would force them to pay her attention. She started to smoke and drink, from the age of twelve. Experimented with drugs.

At the age of sixteen, Allegra was stranger raped, whilst cutting across a car park late at night, to reach her boyfriend's bedsit. She became pregnant, and her mother, along with a GP at their local surgery, bullied her daughter into having an abortion. No way was she having Allie at home with

a kid, and she also didn't want to be "seen as" throwing her out, by the extended family, and by the local community in general.

Allegra left home at nineteen. She lives in a bedsit now, and is entirely estranged from her family. She doesn't blame the quadruplets. She feels let down by her parents. Aunt Louise, along with the rest of the extended family, refuses to talk to Allie. She no longer drinks or smokes, and actually leads a quiet, and approaching reclusive, existence, but the family have decided to shun Allegra, and do not intend to back down. If anyone asks, Allie simply has "her own life", and no one ever pushes them to expand upon this, or justify their cruel treatment of the girl.